



# The Echoing Message

LMN\_BEATZ



Elara sat alone in her dimly lit bedroom, the silence of the house weighing heavily on her heart. It had been months since the accident that took her brother, Leo, but the grief still felt like a shadow following her every move. She stared at the old photographs on her desk, wishing she could hear his voice just one last time.



The clock on her bedside table ticked over to 2:17 AM, the exact moment the world seemed to hold its breath. Suddenly, her phone vibrated against the wood, the screen illuminating the dark room with a harsh, white glow. It was a message from an unknown number, and a strange instinct urged her to pick it up instead of ignoring it.



With trembling fingers, she swiped the screen open to reveal a single line of text that made her blood run cold. "Are you still crying because of me?" the message read, staring back at her from the glowing display. The words were simple, yet they carried a weight that felt impossibly heavy in the midnight air.



Elara gasped, her heart hammering against her ribs like a trapped bird. That specific sentence was exactly what Leo used to say to tease her whenever she got upset. It was their private joke, a phrase no one else could possibly know or understand.



She tried to force herself to breathe, telling her racing mind that this had to be a cruel joke or a heartless prank. Perhaps a friend had overheard them once, or someone was hacking her phone to cause her pain. She gripped the device tightly, her knuckles turning white as she struggled to find a logical explanation.



Desperate for answers, she typed a short response with shaking hands. "Who is this?" she sent, her eyes fixed on the screen as she waited for the bubble to appear. She held her breath, the silence of the room feeling more suffocating than ever before.



Less than three seconds passed before the phone buzzed again in her palm. The reply was chillingly direct: "Stop... you know very well it's me." Elara felt a wave of icy coldness wash over her, the reality of the situation beginning to sink in.



She tapped on the contact information, her vision blurring with tears of confusion and fear. The number displayed was not random; it was Leo's old cell phone number, the one that had been deactivated the very day he died. There was no way this phone should still be active, let alone sending messages.



She looked around her room, half-expecting to see a shadow or a figure standing in the corner, but she was entirely alone. The air grew colder, and a faint scent of Leo's favorite cologne seemed to drift through the stillness. Another message bubble began to pulse on the screen, indicating that more words were coming from the void.



As the three dots flickered, Elara realized that the boundary between life and death had somehow blurred. This was not the end of her grief, but the start of a terrifying new chapter she couldn't escape. She stared at the screen, paralyzed by the knowledge that her brother was reaching out from the other side.